

## MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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### Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools Receives Premier's Award

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SASKATOON – Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and the Kihtōtēminawak Council have received the 2014 Premier's Board of Education Award for Innovation and Excellence in Education for the Urban Aboriginal High School Reform project at Oskāyak High School.

The Saskatchewan School Boards Association coordinates the Premier's Award each year. The award was presented by Government of Saskatchewan Education Minister Don Morgan on behalf of Premier Brad Wall during the SSBA, LEADS and SASBO joint conference banquet Tuesday night.

“There are great things happening in schools across Saskatchewan and Oskāyak is just one example of how our boards of education are working to meet student needs,” said Morgan. “I thank Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and the Kihtōtēminawak Council for their leadership and for the great work they do every day.”

Diane Boyko, chair of the Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools Board of Education, said the board is extremely proud to have worked in partnership with the Kihtōtēminawak Council to help guide the turnaround at Oskāyak.

“By integrating First Nations culture, providing strong student supports and offering a renewed learning program infused with technology, we are helping Oskāyak students reach their full potential. We have gone from three graduates in 2010 to 55 in 2014,” Boyko said. “Students and staff have done amazing work.”

Chris Sicotte, co-chair of the Kihtōtēminawak Council, said he and his colleagues are very pleased and humbled that Oskāyak was selected for the award.

“Over the past several years, we have worked closely with all of our partners, including Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, to provide innovative educational programs to the students of Oskāyak. Our emphasis on cultural awareness and activities aligned with traditional First Nations and Métis values have allowed for greater academic success for our students. This work could not have been done without the hard work and dedication of the teachers, support staff and administration of Oskāyak,” said Sicotte.

The \$3,000 award is sponsored by Xerox Canada and the award recipient is recommended by a panel that includes representation from the Faculty of Education at the University of Regina, the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan, the Ministry of Education, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, and the League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents.

“The Premier's Award shines a spotlight on the great work being done by boards of education throughout Saskatchewan to support student achievement,” said outgoing SSBA President Janet Foord. “Although there is only one recipient of the award, each submission is worthy of recognition for advancing the goal we all work to achieve, which is improved outcomes for students in Saskatchewan.”

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